1649


# Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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*"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!*
*Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;*
*And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."*

JOHN HAY.

## On Picket Duty.

I am now able to supply once more Mr. Yarros's little pamphlet, "Anarchism: Its Aims and Methods," orders for which I have been for some months unable to fill. The price is five cents a copy, or three dollars a hundred copies.

An apology is due to the Boston subscribers to "Instead of a Book." A. H. Simpson having kindly volunteered to receive the entire shipment in one bundle and deliver the books to the various subscribers, thus reducing materially the cost of transportation, the bundle was sent to him by the United States Express Company. But the United States Express Company almost broke the record for business incapacity made by the United States itself, holding the bundle in their Boston office for ten days before delivering it to Mr. Simpson. In view of this unavoidable obstacle I hope to be forgiven.

William Bailie tells us in another column that the right of private property is a corollary of the law of equal freedom. I should like to know how, from that standpoint, he would have met the arguments lately advanced by Stephen T. Byington in favor of the Single Tax. I believe that Mr. Bailie is wrong. What does equal freedom mean if not the protection of each individual in the control of his person and in the results of his labor? In other words, is it anything but a means of rendering person and property secure? If this rightly describes equal freedom, then equal freedom is simply a device, an expedient, adopted by men. The men themselves, both as persons and proprietors, must be existent before this device can be adopted. From which it follows that property, defined as a title to the results of one's efforts, is not a corollary of equal freedom. If Mr. Bailie means that property acquires a standing as a *right* only through acceptance of contract based on equal freedom, then I can understand and agree with him. But I have not understood him to use the word right in that sense in his present series of articles.

## They Are Anarchists Now.

[Frank K. Foster in Labor Leader.]

It is remarkable, when one comes to think of it, the number of active workers in the trade union ranks who have graduated from the State Socialistic school into a maturer conception of the industrial problem. I have in mind no less than half a dozen of the acknowledged planners and thinkers of the great trade societies, holding responsible positions of trust and honor, who are striking exemplifications of this truth.

## Problems of Anarchism.

PROPERTY.

9.—*On the Method of Investigation.*

To trace even briefly the main facts relating to the origin and development of the institution of private property as furnished by the modern science of ethnology would doubtless prove both instructive and valuable, and would assuredly leave little room from the evolutionist point of view for belief in any social reform claiming to undermine or supplant individual property. Such was my first intention, but the amount of space already taken up under the present head in what may seem rather discursive criticism, and the advisability of getting to the essential part of the work, have led me to omit this subject; and, as I have had occasion to refer from time to time to facts which might thus have been brought together and classified, I would suggest to the reader who is sufficiently interested that a study of one or more of the many works on early property institutions and their growth would supply many deficiencies in these articles, especially if the data thus obtained relate to existing races in which all the stages of development can with certainty be traced. The absence of an attempt to discuss the question of landed property will probably seem least excusable. Its magnitude, however, is sufficient to deter me from treating it as a mere section of one division, and the fact that property in land has followed exactly the same order of development as other property, though from its nature more slowly, and has not yet among most nations reached the stage long since attained by other forms, together with my intention to deal with the subject of land later, are among the reasons I have for here skipping property in land. None of the foregoing principles or arguments are invalidated by at present overlooking their application to natural resources. What now remains to be done is to formulate the results of the inquiry.

The right of private property is a corollary of the law of equal freedom. Both arise out of the inherent necessities of conscious and intelligent existence. If property be justified on this principle, it must be limited so as to exclude the right when the principle is violated. Hence the monopoly of natural resources in such a way that others are debarred from using except by paying tribute, in rent, royalties, taxes, etc., is not in harmony with the law of property. The use of force, whether the power be legal, political, or otherwise, in defiance of the law, does not justify such property rights and privileges. Thus acquired property is robbery.

What was formulated then about property was an ideal law. Existing conditions do not fit it quite. Yet this method of investigation is not thereby less valuable; it is the only means of reaching scientific truth, and will be exemplified more fully in what is to follow, when other principles for our guidance in discovering the truth buried beneath economic discussions will be sought. Having a clear conception of the conditions and then formulating a law in harmony with them, the next work to do is to observe differences or discrepancies between the ideal and the actual; then the task is to find out the causes of disagreement, whether they are accidental and removable, or due to circumstances that permit of no change. Let us exemplify the point. The conditions of freedom are agreed upon, not by mere empiricism, but in accordance with the knowledge and insight into life afforded by a scientific conception of evolution; this gives us the law of equal freedom. An intelligent understanding of it is enough to assure acquiescence in the principle. This in turn forms the basis for seeking a principle in property rights. We have the conditions, clear and understood, but ideal; the resultant property law is clear enough, but also ideal, for the most important circumstances are lacking to its realization. Yet as justice, itself an ideal, is our guide and aim, we desire the social environment most closely approaching to the realization of our law of property rights. Hence the need for understanding existing social conditions. As far as it relates to property, the problem we thus get to solve is the discovery and demonstration of the causes which prevent our law from being fulfilled. Here then lies the direction of at least one important part of the subject. It must be pursued in company with other subjects in the inquiry. A discussion of labor and capital, the laws of wages and of interest, land, and taxes is entailed.

The critical discussion that followed the demonstration of the true principle or law of property aimed chiefly at showing that modern opponents of the existing property customs have utterly failed to establish any sound objection to the law. Their attack on private property has been proved to be really on incidentals, on abuses that do not arise out of property as we have defined it. At some length the main fallacies of their alternative schemes were pointed out, and their inability to solve the problems they raise, and we have also established some important points that are worth re-stating. First, the evolutional theory of the social organism cannot be used effectively to prove the impending downfall of private property; individualism as opposed to collectivism is supported by the theory, not, as Socialists allege, overthrown by it. Second, it has been abundantly proved that private property and enterprise have hitherto done more and continue to do more for the welfare of mankind than any form of collectivism. Third, at best the reforms attained by overriding the principle of private property are merely temporary palliatives, which will in the long run intensify the evils they set out to remove; while property under freedom offers more hope. Fourth, we have seen that the demand for collectivism and seeming opposition to private property arise, not from any proof of the efficacy of the former or defect of the latter, but from a failure to trace the real sources of the evil. This point will at more length be dealt with, and a determined effort made to bring out what are the lines of change most likely to result in real and permanent improvement of social conditions. Nevertheless, if we are to adhere to established truth and scientific principles, the treatment of the question will be chiefly negative; social reform is mere fantasy if it ignores vital economic principles and fails to allow for all the known factors, and economics, like other sciences, can recognize no data that are not the result of observation and classified experience. Hence there is little room for positive assertion about the effects of circumstances still enveloped in the mysteries of the future, and no more is safe to do than learn precisely the lines on which society has evolved and is now moving. Such methods of ideally formulating our knowledge, so that it applies over the widest possible field and embraces in a general way the largest range of phenomena, as have been attempted in treating first of liberty and then of property seem to me best to secure the above end. It may be observed that principles thus derived hold good throughout many and changing conditions, as the true principle of property remains as valid and as just under competitive capitalism as in undeveloped primitive society.

WM. BAILIE.

# Liberty.

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*"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel."*—PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience

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J. E. BRENNAN, 119 Broadway, Pawtucket, R. I.—"English Men of Letters—De Quincey."

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## Try Freedom First.

*To the Editor of Liberty:*

I am not satisfied by the parallel you draw (in No. 259 of Liberty) between the man who takes possession of a piece of land and the man who "takes possession of his own person." The man who simply defends his person, or the work of his hands, restrains me only from violating his liberty. He does not interfere with any useful liberty that I might have had if he had not been in the world; he only claims possession of what he has brought into the world. But if he plants his person in a narrow passage through which I wish to go, and bids me not to disturb him there, his self-defence goes beyond keeping me from violating his liberty; it becomes the means of additionally restraining me from a liberty which I had before he or his came on the scene,—a liberty with which he had no concern till he made it his business by putting himself in my way.

Just so if he plants his property on a piece of land, and thereby holds the land. He has cut down my liberty of locomotion; he has imprisoned me in that part of the world that lies outside his fence.

Obviously this form of restriction of liberty, if carried far enough, may become oppressive to an almost unlimited degree, and may in an imaginary case come to be the worst of all existing oppressions. The practical question is whether, in any actual or probable case, it has been carried far enough to become worse than its alternative.

This is the same as to ask how high rents are; for rent is the measure of what one loses by being shut out of the land. You estimate that with the coming of liberty and the progress of science rent will fall till, in ordinary cases, the best land in use will produce only about ten per cent. more than the poorest. If you are right, I quite agree that neither liberty nor economy would be well served by keeping up the machinery of a government for the sake of collecting this small margin. But I am not much inclined to believe your prophecy. I have no faith in a great reduction of rent from any cause except the general opening for use of vacant land; and I have no faith in a permanent reduction from any cause whatever. I think that when a fall in rent is prophesied, the wish is generally father to the thought. We have seen at least a beginning of some of the scientific advances—electric service and rapid transit—which are to send rent down; but we have not seen that this caused a corresponding beginning of a check to the increase of rent. Until I see such a check, I propose to act on the supposition that the increase will always continue; and I think I have a good working principle there, unless some one can show me that my acting on the faith of a decrease will help to cause the decrease. If I am right,—if rent is to keep its present place among economic factors,—it is at least plausibly apparent that the invasion represented by rent is greater than the invasion involved in confiscating rent, and using it, as well as government is able to do, for the good of the people.

In what I said about rights I did not intend to deny my belief in rights, but to say that I did not intend to make right a premise in this discussion. I proposed to base my argument on equal liberty alone, and to confess defeat if I could not sustain it on that basis. The corollaries of equal liberty ought to be the same, whatever the ground of equal liberty may be. I certainly do not believe in the existence of any right which could override equal liberty, or require to be considered in connection with it, in the matter we are discussing.

STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

41 E. 69TH STREET, NEW YORK.

As the governor of North Carolina said to the governor of South Carolina, "It's a long time between drinks." So many weeks have passed since my last grapple with Mr. Byington that I have almost forgotten "where we were at." But catch as catch can, and Mr. Byington's last proposition seems to afford a chance for a good hold.

I tell him, therefore, that, while it is true that "the corollaries of equal liberty ought to be the same, whatever the *ground of equal liberty* may be," they certainly will not be the same, whatever *equal liberty itself* may be. Equal liberty to control self and the results of self-exertion is one thing; equal liberty to use land is another and a different thing; and the corollaries differ as widely as the things themselves. One corollary of equal liberty to use land is Communism, as I showed conclusively in my last reply to Mr. Byington, and it is to be noted that he makes no attempt whatever to meet my argument on this point. Yet he must meet it, or his case is lost in the view of all who object to Communism.

Next, as to my parallel between the defence of person and the defence of property. Mr. Byington says that it does not satisfy him, but he fails to show any defect in it. He attempts to point out a distinction, but this distinction is easily shown to be baseless. The man who defends his person, says Mr. Byington, does not deprive others of any liberty which they enjoyed before his advent, while the man who occupies land deprives others of that liberty of occupancy which was theirs before he came. Let us see. Is it not plain that, as soon as a man is born, his body necessarily occupies space, and that the defence of his person is simply a prohibition of others from occupying this space, which, before his birth, they were at perfect liberty to occupy? There is no denying it. He, by the defence of his person, imprisons all other persons in that part of the world that lies outside his body. Such imprisonment does not differ at all in kind from the imprisonment of all others in that part of the world that lies outside one's fence. What becomes, then, of Mr. Byington's distinction? Obviously my original assertion that liberty is abridged as well by the defence of person as by the defence of property holds good.

Having disposed of Mr. Byington's theoretical argument, let us now consider his practical view. All depends, he tells us, upon what one's fence encloses. If the space enclosed by one man's fence should not exceed in value by more than ten per cent. the space enclosed by another man's fence, he would not favor an enforcement of equality between them. He does not tell us at what percentage of excess he would think interference advisable, but evidently there is a point at which he would begin the confiscation of rent. Now, I do not wish to be outdone in concessions; hence let me say at once that I can conceive of a point at which I too would begin the confiscation, not only of rent, but of everything else that I could lay my hands on. If, after the achievement of all the industrial freedoms, economic rent should prove to be the cause of such inequalities in comfort that an effective majority found themselves at the point of starvation, they would undoubtedly cry, "Liberty be damned!" and proceed to even up; and I think that at that stage of the game they would be great fools if they didn't. From this it will be seen that I am no more a stickler for absolutely equal liberty under all circumstances than is Mr. Byington for an absolute equality of comfort.

The difference between us is this: he has a great fear of rent; I have a great fear of slavery. All depends on which of these two fears is the better founded. I consider the Single Tax the entering wedge that will permit the advent of all the other forms of authoritarian Socialism and thereby deprive life even of the small merit that it now possesses. Rather than this I would endure an inequality of comfort far more burdensome than any that economic rent alone can, in my view, produce. Now, Mr. Byington admits, if I understand him, that freedom, by opening vacant land for use, would cause a great, though temporary, reduction of rent. The Anarchists maintain that this movement of reduction would steadily continue. Then I ask Mr. Byington and the Single Taxers to wait awhile. Try freedom first. Even if it results as you think it will, it will by your own admission do good at first, and, when the reaction you expect begins, no harm will have been done, and there will still be time for the confiscation of rent. If, on the other hand, freedom results as we think it will, there will be no need for the confiscation of rent and all the people will grow steadily richer and freer. Why rush into slavery before its necessity has been demonstrated by experience? I repeat, try freedom first.

Perhaps Mr. Byington will urge as a reason for not trying freedom that the scientific advances looked to as factors in the equalization of sites and soils have not been accompanied thus far by any equalizing tendency. But this argument will

have no force until these advances proceed under conditions of complete industrial and commercial freedom. The benefits of machinery are rendered nugatory by monopoly. Who can say that the tendency of rapid transit has not been to reduce rent, even though as an actual fact rent has risen? A monopoly system is in the nature of a screw which takes an extra turn with every increase of well-being. Freedom means the abolition of the screw and a consequent enjoyment of the benefits of expansion. Do not judge freedom by the results of monopoly. Try freedom first!

In conclusion, I think it pertinent to inform the reader of a fact of a personal character which, it seems to me, will throw some light on this discussion. If I am correctly informed, Mr. Byington is a Prohibitionist, and in the last campaign was a candidate for office on the Prohibitory ticket. Is it any wonder, then, I ask, that a man whose interpretation of equal liberty is so lax that he can reconcile it with Prohibition should find it easier still to accept the Single Tax? Does not this fact, if it is a fact, go far to sanction my belief that the Single Tax would hasten the advent of tyranny in all its forms? T.

## Our Catholicon.

Charles H. Kerr & Co., of Chicago, announce a monthly magazine of politics and economics, the first number of which will appear in May. Its name will be "New Occasions," suggested by Lowell's use of the phrase in his "Present Crisis." It will be edited by B. F. Underwood, who has secured as contributors, among others, Dr. Lewis G. Janes and Dr. Edward Montgomery. Mr. Underwood manifests today (at least so it seems to me) a much greater hospitality toward radical views on secular problems than he showed when editor of the "Index," and this fact coupled with his unquestioned ability ought to make his conduct of "New Occasions" a guarantee of a very excellent magazine.

Upon the prospectus issued I have but one criticism to offer. The new periodical "commits itself to no one panacea." To how many panaceas, then, does it commit itself? All, several, or none at all? Evidently not to none at all, for the language then would have been "commits itself to no panacea." But it hardly seems advisable for a periodical to commit itself to several panaceas, since one panacea, if it is all that the name implies,—that is, a cure-all,—is obviously adequate. Moreover, two panaceas, if applied, are very apt to neutralize each other, as, for instance, equal liberty and the Single Tax, or individual sovereignty and Prohibition, or voluntary taxation and Protection, or personal freedom and compulsory monogamy, or Free Trade and a government monopoly of banking, or Anarchism and State Socialism.

I trust Mr. Underwood will not look upon this criticism as technical. It is more than that. It is a warning against two dangers,—the danger, on the one hand, of trying to suit all schools by endorsing all their specifics, and the danger, on the other hand, of assuming that for social ills there can be no specific remedy. To warrant such assumption, either the impossibility of a specific must be demonstrated on general grounds, or else the inadequacy of each particular specific must be shown. Let "New Occasions" try its 'prentice hand on the Anarchistic specific,—Liberty. To be sure, the Anarchists do not offer it as an absolute catholicon, but they do insist that it is a tolerably close approach thereto. They declare that it will serve. To "New Occasions" they put this question: What's the matter with Liberty? And they hope to receive the answer: *She's* all right!

T.

## Suicide and the Law.

Interesting papers on the above subject were recently read before the New York Society of Medical Jurisprudence. The essayists all agreed that no legislation had ever tended to prevent suicide. The theory of the old English common law, long since relinquished, was that suicide could be prevented by confiscating the estate left by a suicide and by submitting the body to disgrace, say by exposing it to public view and then burying it at the cross roads with a stake driven through it. The theory of the penal code of New York is that suicide can be prevented by punishing as felons those who attempt to take their lives and fail. It should be added that, although no State insists on submitting the body of a suicide to disgrace in the good old way, the principle has not been given up. The practice of furnishing the newspapers with the details of the life and conduct of the suicide and his or her family is doubtless a survival of the English method.

However, laws against suicide have no other result, when rigorously enforced, than to make those contemplating self-destruction surer of their means. Their absolute uselessness has been fully demonstrated.

The New York law is a dead letter. The law was passed in 1881, and no conviction of an attempted suicide under it is known except one, and that one case is a case of injustice. Just after the law was enacted, a poor longshoreman suffering from delirium tremens jumped into the river. He was fished out, tried, and sentenced to State prison, where he yet remains.

V. Y.

The "Arena" for April prints Mr. Yarros's article entitled "Anarchism: What It is and What It is Not." Except in its endorsement of sundry "rights" as corollaries of equal liberty,—the mistake which has caused Herbert Spencer so much trouble,—it is clear and convincing, luminous to all who have eyes. But the magazine writers whom Mr. Yarros is trying to correct, either having no eyes or refusing to use the eyes they have, will probably go on in their old course of misrepresentation. At one time I esteemed it a privilege to be able to write English, but every day its value grows more doubtful in my view. I have published a volume in which I thought I had made it tolerably clear that one of my most fundamental beliefs is the belief in property. But the New York "Press" reviewer declares that I teach that property should be done away with. I supposed that I had left no room for doubt of the wide difference between John Most's aims and mine. But the New York "Herald" reviewer hints that, though we do not employ the same weapons, we have the same ends. I hoped that I had succeeded in proving that Spies and his comrades were not Anarchists, but the Lowell "Times" reviewer will have it that I pronounce them "the seed of a great Anarchistic 'church' of the future." And so it will go on. Out of a hundred reviews that "Instead of a Book" may receive, not more than five, I will venture, will show the slightest evidence of ability to understand plain English. About the same percentage of intelligence will be revealed in the disquisitions upon Anarchism which Mr. Yarros's article is likely to call forth. But "hope springs eternal," and, if even five per cent. will listen and understand, Mr. Yarros and I will keep on.

## Death of Dyer D. Lum.

The following obituary of Dyer D. Lum is taken from the "Twentieth Century":

Dyer D. Lum died in this city, suddenly, on Thursday, the 6th inst., of fatty degeneration of the heart. His body was taken to his birthplace, Northampton, Mass., for interment. Mr. Lum was 53 years of age. He served during the war in the Fourteenth New York cavalry, acting as adjutant, and at the close, when he was attached to Company A, he was a brevet captain. He was for a time in Libby prison, and was on the Red River expedition with Gen. Banks. By trade Mr. Lum was a bookbinder, and soon after the war he entered the labor movement. In 1876 he was a candidate for lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts, the nominee for governor being Wendell Phillips. In 1877 he was secretary to a congressional committee appointed "to inquire into the depression of labor." This committee's labors carrying it about the country and as far west as California, Mr. Lum then became widely known. Later he issued several works, among them a "History of the Trial of the Anarchists"; "Spiritual Delusions," which treated of Mormonism; "The Economics of Anarchy," issued three years ago; and "The Philosophy of Trades-Unionism." He was frequently a contributor, in prose and verse, to many radical reform journals. Mr. Lum was a revolutionary Anarchist, and after the Haymarket affair in Chicago was selected by his comrades, as the fitting successor to Albert Parsons, to be editor of the "Alarm." In disposition, Mr. Lum was most amiable; in the character of his mind, he was philosophical; in mental capacity, he was at once keen and broad. His friends, who were many, mourn his passing away. The poem we print in another column he sent us about ten days ago. It is probably his last piece of composition.

The poem, which is given below, seems almost to have been written in anticipation of the author's approaching end:

LIFE.

The songsters of the meadows
Their tuneful notes prolong,
And radiant Nature smiling
Rejoices in their song;
The laughing sunbeams glancing
O'er fields of gorgeous hue
See mint and pansies dancing
Till scents the air imbue.

The kine forget the clover,
The sheep with lambkins play,
The fish leap out the brooklet—
Eager for holiday;
While through the boughs the zephyrs
Beat time to melodies
That urge life's pulses onward
To softer symphonies.

But o'er the scene a mortal,
With reason's gift endowed,
Looks with ironic silence,
His head in sadness bowed;
For him the notes are discord—
Ghost-dancing of hopes dead;
For him life brings no blessing
When love and hope have fled.

The songsters of the meadows
Their tuneful notes prolong,
And radiant Nature smiling
Rejoices in their song;
But o'er the scene the mortal,
Self-poised, self-conscious, proud,
Bends 'neath life's heavy burden—
One of the human crowd!

# The Sociological Index.

THE SOCIOLOGICAL INDEX is a classified weekly catalogue of the most important articles relating to sociology, as well as to other subjects in which students of sociology are usually interested, that appear in the periodical press of the world.

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#### BELLES-LETTRES.

*882. Sappho. By Edgar Saltus. Lippincott's Magazine, April. 2500 words.

*883. Walt [Whitman]. By John Vance Cheney. Californian, April. 5200 words.

†884. The Future of Fiction. By Hamlin Garland. Arena, April. 4000 words.

885. A Last Word About Realism. By Edgar Fawcett. N. Y. Independent, March 30. 2400 words.

#### BIOGRAPHY.

876. Edward Burne Jones and His Works. By Wm. C. Ward. N. Y. Independent, March 30. 3000 words.

†877. A Poet of the People. [James G. Clark.] By B. O. Flower. With portrait. Arena, April. 4700 words.

#### ETHICS.

878. Herbert Spencer as a Reformer. By Victor Yarros, with editorial reply. N. Y. Home Journal, March 29. 2800 words.

#### FICTION.

*879. Omega. The Last Days of the World. I. Illustrated. By Camille Flammarion. Cosmopolitan, April. 12,000 words.

#### FINANCE.

890. Origin and History of Money. By Tony Echert. Illustrated. Chicago Inter-Ocean, March 26. 2200 words.

891. The Commercial and the Fiat Value of Silver. Editorial in Galveston News, March 26. 1600 words.

†910. The Democratic Party and the Currency. By R. P. Bland. North American Review, April. 8 pages.

†912. The Brussels Conference Reviewed. By Charles Foster. North American Review, April. 8 pages.

†913. Money as an International Question. By E. Benj. Andrews. Atlantic Monthly, April. 8 pages.

#### IMMIGRATION.

904. Immigration. N. Y. Post, March 27. 3000 words.

*920. Fallacies and Facts as to Immigration. By J. B. Weber. Engineering Magazine, April. 3000 words.

#### INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION.

*921. The Industrial Problem in Australia. By Edmund Mitchell. Engineering Magazine, April. 13 pages.

#### LAND.

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†900. Authority in Christianity. By George C. Lorimer. Arena, April. 2100 words.

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